

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-05 PRS-01 SS-15 H-02 SIG-02
SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 /036 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND

S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

S/S - JETHYDEN

-----045540 310052Z /61

O 310003Z DEC 77 ZFF5

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

CINCEUR

INFO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 310923 TOSEC 130059

CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - DECEMBER 30

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1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR DECEMBER 30,
1977. FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS THOMAS RESTON.

MR. RESTON: GOOD AFTERNOON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I AM
LATE BECAUSE SOME OF US WERE LISTENING TO THE PRESIDENT

ON THE TELEVISION.

I HAVE NO ANNOUNCEMENTS. DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

Q. IF THE PRESIDENT, WHO IS SUPPOSED TO FORMULATE FOREIGN POLICY, ANNOUNCED THAT MR BEGIN'S PROPOSAL IS "A LARGE STEP FORWARD," WHY DOES SECRETARY VANCE WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT ENDORSE MR. BEGIN'S PROPOSAL? DOES THE SECRETARY MEAN TO IMPLY THAT WHAT THE PRESIDENT MEANT IS THAT WHILE IT'S A LARGE STEP FORWARD THE U.S. DOESN'T APPROVE OF IT, OR WHAT?

A. LET ME SAY TWO THINGS HERE. THE PRESIDENT HAS JUST ADDRESSED THIS SUBJECT IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE AT WARSAW. HE HAS ENUNCIATED THE POLICY OF THIS GOVERNMENT. THE

SECRETARY OF STATE OBVIOUSLY SUPPORTS THE PRESIDENT IN WHAT HE SAID.

AND, FURTHERMORE, JUST FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE HERE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE DID GIVE AN ON THE RECORD BRIEFING ON THE AIRPLANE TO A POOL OF JOURNALISTS WHICH IS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR USE IN THE PRESS OFFICE, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT; BUT THE POLICY OF THIS GOVERNMENT IS AS ENUNCIATED THIS MORNING BY THE PRESIDENT AT WARSAW. (NOTE: POOL SUMMARY OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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THE PRESS ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE, DECEMBER 30, IS BEING TRANSMITTED BY WIRELESS FILE.)

Q. HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING RECENTLY ABOUT THE AMERICAN GIRL THAT WAS ARRESTED BY THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES IN TEL AVIV? (TERRY FLEENER)

A. NO.

Q. HAS THE ADMINISTRATION TRANSMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT SOME CLARIFICATIONS, EXPLANATIONS OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON TELEVISION THE NIGHT BEFORE LAST?

A. I HAVE NOTHING ON THAT FOR YOU.

Q. WOULD YOU INQUIRE PLEASE?

A. YES.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ABOUT THE SECRETARY'S TRAVEL PLANS?

A. NO.

Q. WHAT CAN YOU CONFIRM AT THIS POINT?

A. I THINK, AS YOU'LL NOTE, IN WHAT HE SAID ON THE PLANE YESTERDAY, HE DID SAY THAT HE WOULD BE GOING. AND I DON'T THINK THE DATES ARE CONFIRMED YET.

Q. THIS SAYS THE 15TH AND 16TH, TENTATIVELY.

Q. IT'S BEEN ANNOUNCED IN ISRAEL.

A. I JUST DON'T THINK IT REALLY HAS BEEN TIED DOWN, FRANKLY.

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Q. THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT IN THIS POOL REPORT, "I

WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT ENDORSED THE PROPOSAL AS PUT FORWARD BY MR. BEGIN." PRESUMABLY, THE SECRETARY AGREES WITH THE PRESIDENT. IT IS A LARGE STEP FORWARD. I AM WONDERING IF THIS JUST MERELY MEANS THAT WE HAVE NOT ENDORSED IT BECAUSE THERE'S NOTHING TO SIGN AS YET, OR DOES IT MEAN THAT WE HAVE SOME OTHER PROPOSAL THAT IS OUR POLICY? IS THERE SOME OTHER PROPOSAL OF MR. BEGIN'S THAT WE HAVE IN MIND? DO WE SUPPORT TOTAL EVACUATION OF ALL ISRAEL TROOPS FROM ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORY, OR WHAT?

A. YOU KNOW THAT I'M JUST GOING TO RING THE CHANGES ON THIS WITH YOU. I STAND BY WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID THIS MORNING IN WARSAW, AND I STAND BY WHAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID LAST NIGHT ON THE WAY TO WARSAW, IN THE AIRPLANE. WE DO CONSIDER MR. BEGIN'S PROPOSAL TO BE A STEP FORWARD. AND AN APPROPRIATE STARTING POINT FOR DISCUSSIONS. AS THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID, JUST HALF AN HOUR AGO, WE DON'T ENDORSE THAT PARTICULAR PLAN IN EACH AND EVERY RESPECT.

Q. DO WE HAVE ANY OTHER PLAN THAT WE DO ENDORSE? THERE'S NO OTHER PLAN, IN OTHER WORDS?

A. I DIDN'T SAY THAT. WE DO NOT HAVE A BLUEPRINT FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST. THIS MUST BE A SUBJECT FOR NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES, BUT WE ARE IN A POSITION OF SUGGESTING IDEAS WHICH MIGHT HELP NARROW THE GAPS BETWEEN THE PARTIES AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. CHRISTOPHER

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